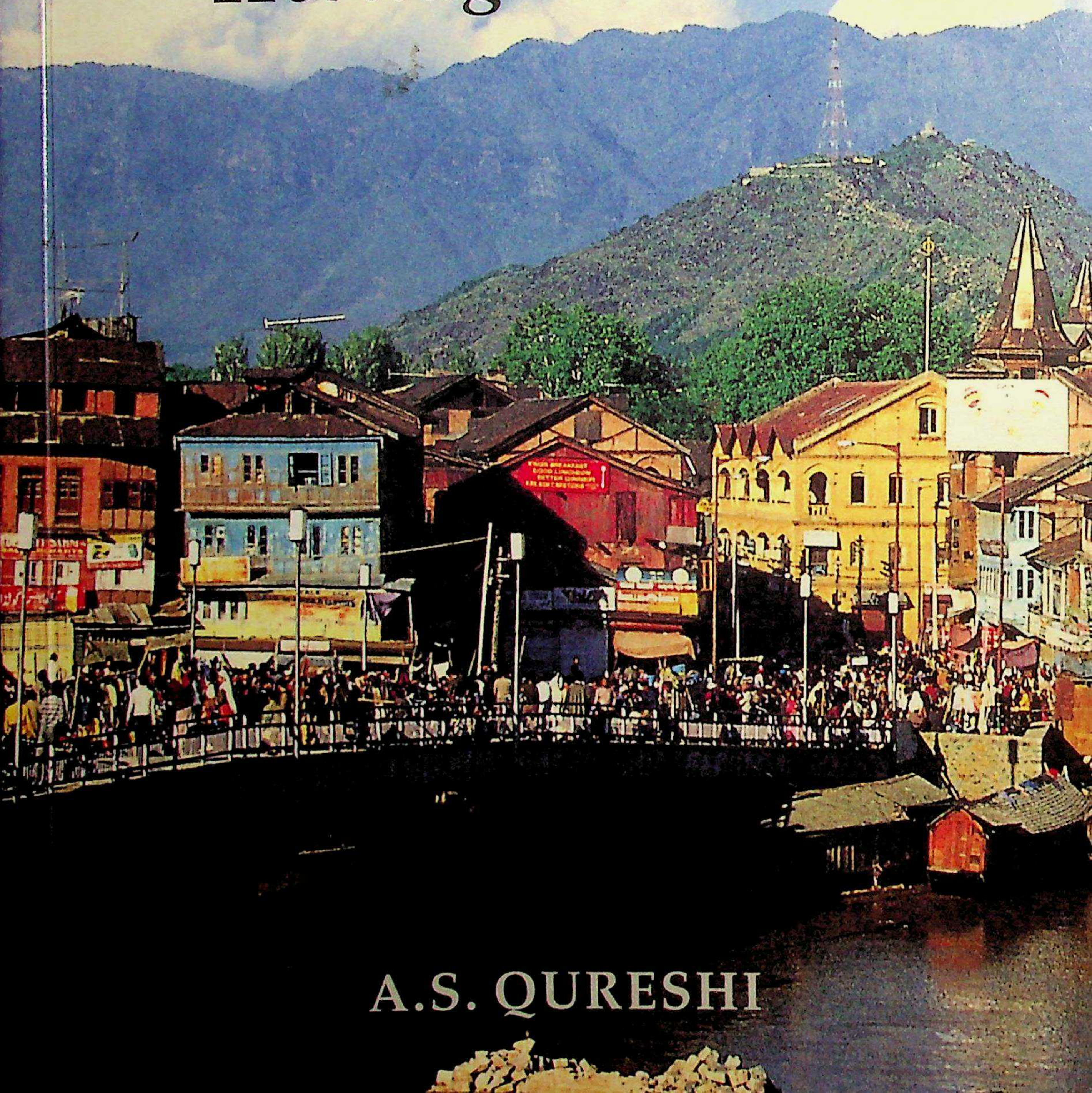
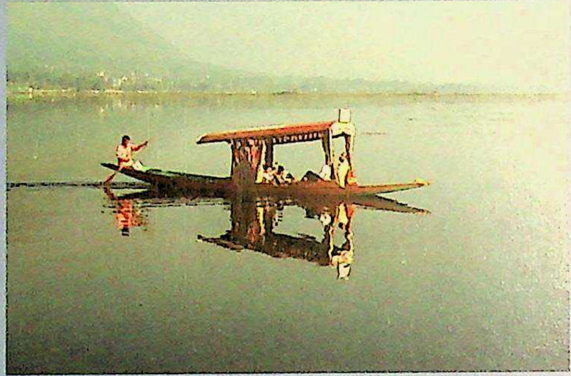
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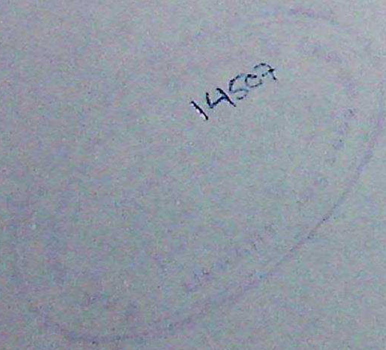
Heritage Treasure



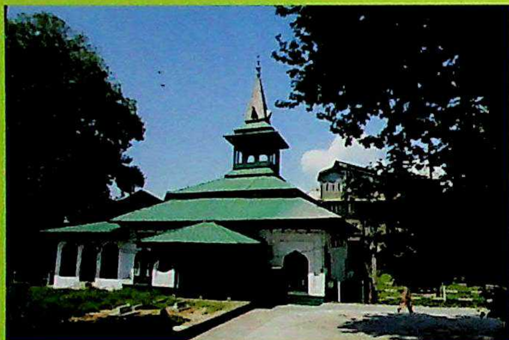
A.S. QURESHI

SRINAGAR
Heritage Treasure









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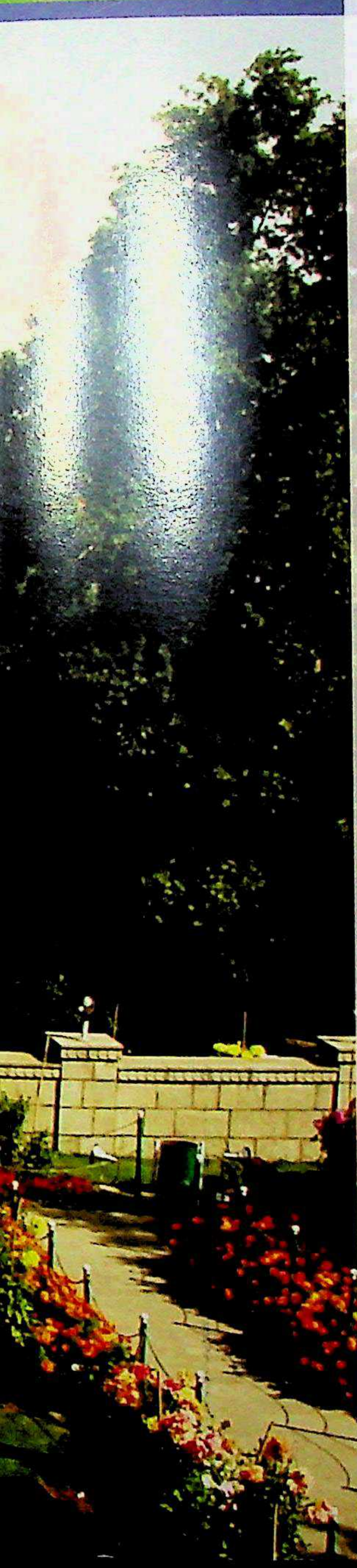


Dedicated to my respected father (Mohammad. Amin Qureshi) who created interest and urge in me for knowing the historical past, as he was always with a book in his hand.





Contents







Introduction

Kashmir is an oldest living city in the erstwhile united north India, with its history as old as about four to five thousand years, starting from pit"doub" dwellers of Burzahama to big impressive, majestic stone structures of Martand & Paraehaspora, from hidden civilization of Kotabal to Marhama, from ancient sites of Harvan to Bethpora(Bandipora) and from lost Zoon-Dab to Pari mahal and Sher Ghari.

The tribal life of aborigines, Nagas, Pashachs and Yakhsh, arrival of Aryans, growth and fall of Buddhism, revival of Brahmanism, introduction of Islam through sufi saints, religious scholars, theologians and ruthless rule of Afghan, Sikh and Dogras, speak volumes, about the sufferings of kashmiris, having faced through ages down to present era. As per historians and researchers, a kashmiri has survived through great ups and downs, which, if other people had to face, would have lost their gender (Biscoe) and would have vanished in the haze and dust of times. The great kashmiri civilization, mostly still buried in this blessed land, having treasures (artifacts) yet to be explored, unfolded and exposed, speak to the world, that we, kashmiris can no more be ignored as "hatoos"

I hope, this humble endeavour of mine would invoke more interest in the concerned, competent and interested people, to dig more deep in the subject (watniat), to unfold the greatness of "Mouj Kashir" and of its unsung hero's

Being a non expert in the subject, I inadvertently might have committed some mistakes or some deficiencies may have crept in, which may please be ignored, to sustain my urge and thirst to know more about the past of my beloved mother land.

A.S.Qureshi

"Qaid-i-Hayat"
Out side Kathi Darwasa,
Srinagar.
January, 2007.

Heritage Treasure

All heritage sites have played an important role in the recognition of a city/town vis- a- vis its richness in monuments, archeology, art, culture and civilization. The old monumental structures like palaces, places of worship/ burial, gardens and other centers of historical value, speak about its glorious past. The sites also speak about cultural status of the countries and of its natives both present and past in the community of nations. Great cities like Egypt, Rome, Tashkand, Bukhara, Samarkand, Delhi and Lahore have witnessed great strides, turbulent periods but have out- lived all onslaught of invading marauders and human imposed savagery.

Srinagar is reported to be as one of the oldest living city of the country established by Raja Praversena-I and developed by king Ashoka in 250 B.C. It has survived to date the vicissitudes of time in the form of afflictions, in spite of continuous sufferings, decline, decay, destruction, loot, plunder and abuse at the hands of its some rulers down to our age. Calamities like earthquakes, fire; floods have also been harsh, hostile and unkind to its inhabitants especially of the valley. Its citizens have been harassed, persecuted, humiliated and tormented to lowest levels like penury, abysmal poverty, hunger, nonentity and sufferings. But its continued existence under very odd conditions, glorious cultural past, mastery in art and craft, literary contribution and other intellectual pursuits stand out as a witness to the symbolic resilience and strength for survival, giving a hope of worthful revival in near future.

Greek classics of Ptolemy, Dionysis, Hikatauis, Herodotes contain references about Kashmir. (Stein), Hikatauis lived between 549-486 B C. Dimitrius ruled over a large kingdom which included valley Kashmir as well. The earliest reference to Kashmir is mentioned in annals of Hang-Su 220 BC. Arabic works of Al-Masudi, Al-Qazwani, Al-Idrisi and Al-Beruni have information about "Qashmir". (Hussnain)

All travelers who had an opportunity to visit the valley, Hang-Su 220BC, Hiuen-Tsuing 631AD, Ou-Kong

Old City Srinagar



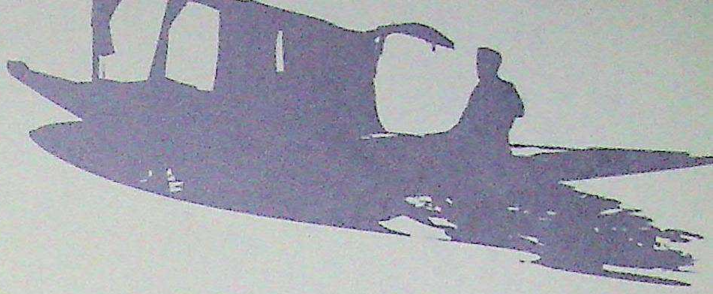
759,Al-Beruni 1033 , Xavier 1597,Abul-Fazal 1598,, Bernier 1663,Foster 1783,Moorcraft 1817,Jacquemnt 1819-35.Young Husband 1882, Stein,M,A.1886,Walter Lawrence 1889-95AD and Marion Doughty in early twentieth century, have praised Kashmir's archaeological sites, par excellent scenic beauty in their write ups/ travelogues. The authors have also spoken

high of its vast potential for development of tourist sites viz heritage monuments, art and crafts, architecture and above all its mesmerizing scenic beauty. Having soothing climatic conditions, prevailing in summers when whole Indian sub continent is burning under very high temperatures down in plains.

Most of the Kings and Spiritual Personalities who marched/ traveled towards this blessed land, called it'

D[illegible] Lake





Heaven on Earth 'Even some made it, their permanent abode or desired to breath their last in this blessed land. Some of the historians (Indologists). Orientalists have also reported that at every step, valley Kashmir has treasure(s) of spiritual personalities and physical artifacts, yet to be explored or unfolded. This is virtually confirmed when one moves from Martand(south) to Ushkar(north) from Bethpora-Bandipora (east) to Charisharief (west). To support, the author would like to share an anectode with the readers. Between 1918-22 an A'lim (religious scholar) from out side the state visited Srinagar and desired to have "Kashf-e-qaboor" of mazars (graveyards) located within city (then). Late khwaja Mohammad Amin Qureshi and his cousin kwhaja Nasr-ud-din Qari sahib (father of the author and Saif-ud-din Qari) respectively were directed by their elders to accompany the A'lim. The inquisitive mission was started from the site of ziyarat of Dastagir sahib and moved to Malkha and other surrounding ziyarats and culminated the visit at the ziyarat of Mirza Akmal-ud-din sahib. Later on, when requested to relate/express his valuable opinion/ observation about the visit, he (A'lim) reluctantly informed," that prince(s) (spiritual) were seen underneath the dusty plain ground, having no epitaph or tomb above, while as at places decorated tombs had vacuum as well." This vindicates the truth that Valley Kashmir is the abode of awliya (saints/friends of Allah) other wise known down in the history in Kashmiri language as "Peer vaer / Resh vaer."

Srinagar being an ancient city, rich in ancient sites like Sangraharas, Stupas, Vihars, Bavans, Maths, Tiraths and Ziyarths belonging to Nagas, Pashachas, Yakhsh, Buddhist, Hindus (brahmanical), and Muslim periods respectively. With passage of time, most of the sites have weathered partially or wholly or damaged by natural calamities or by some fanatical individual or ruler(s).

The present generation of kashmiris having now exposure to a wider spectrum of modern, cultured and learned societies, education, media, travel and science & technology, feel proud of their past, cutting across the lines of faith and allegiance to any political or religious or social group/party, feel resurgence and exhibit keen interest in its heritage, art, culture etc and desire timely steps for its restoration, conservation, promotion and maintenance, so that no further damage, distortion is caused to Kashmir or "kashmiriyat."

The presence of heritage sites referred to here under, if looked after scientifically and developed from tourist promotion point of view, would open flood gates of tourist from Western, West Asian, Central Asian and Far- Eastern countries. For this, deep research with a commitment needs to be carried by unbiased scholars of international repute and standing,

A Reported visit of King Solomon/ Suliman to Srinagar (Kashmir)
B Excavations for "Copper Plates" of 4th Buddhist conference, and
C "Rozabal ziyart" (Jewish grave) at Khanyar in Srinagar(Kashmir)



Pandrathan

The oldest capital city of Kashmir established by Raja Praversena-I and developed during the era of king Ashoka was located at river bank Vitasta (Jehlim) just out side the city near present cantonment, about four to five kilometers from present capital Srinagar. It was a dominated centre of Buddhism. In recent past, some stupas were identified here by Daya Ram Sahani(1914-16) on the behest of Jon Marshal. The two/three stupas were located just above the Pandrathan temple under a mound presently in cantonment area. The stupas were traced on the basis of littered stones and damaged foundations. The Buddhist idols, artifacts found there, have been placed in Sri Partap museum. This old Buddhist city was unfortunately destroyed by a devastating fire in 960 AD during the reign of Abhimanyu, a Buddhist hater, as he was patronizing Shivism. Only a small temple built by king Partha in 921 AD survived, as the temple was located just on the river bank with foundation in a pond like structure receiving water from the river Jehlum. The temple is considered a classic example of Kashmir architecture, having visible influences of Greek and Roman architecture. The temple is still surrounded by a controversy, whether it has been originally a Buddhist Vihar and subsequently converted to a Hindu temple. Presently it is covered by magnificent chinars and other plantation and is still being visited by the tourists/pilgrims. The famous hermit of Kashmir 'Lall Ded' belonged to this place.

Kohi-i-Suleiman (Shankeracharya)

The hill top, present "Koh-i- Suleiman" is reported to have been visited by king Soloman/Suleiman/Sandhimau during 2629-2564 BC, that is why it is still known as Takht- e-Suleiman. The visit gets substantiated when archaeologists/ historians report about the mound in "Osh" Kyrgystan (Central Asia) which is reported to have been blessed by King Suleimn's visit, when he moved towards East. It still bears the name Takht-e-Suleiman or seat of Suleiman. The place is a seat of pilgrimage for local Muslims and Nestorian Christians.
The present structure at the hill top was built by king Gopadatiya 426-365 BC, subsequently restored by Gopadatta in 78 AD and further repaired by king Lalitaditya 699-736AD. It is reported that Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (Budshah) also ordered for its repairs during (1420-1470) AD. The village below the hill is still known as Gopkar. Some report that it was built by king Jaloka in 220BC. It is also reported that the structure had a stone slab mentioning about the visit of Youz Asaf to the valley Kashmir which has either been stolen or damaged during Sikh/Dogra rule due to religious bias. Notwithstanding the present lingam inside the temple is reported to have been placed by Raja Histi in 54 Hindu era. The hill top was rechristened as Shankaracharya after reappearance of hindu revivalist movement (Brahmanical) lead by Shankaracharya (a non-local) from south India. It is also reported that the hill was called as Shankaracharya from April 1865A.D, on the orders of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, when persecution of Kashmiri muslims started in valley, as a reaction to Shawl Baf's agitation against Dogra rule in Srinagar city, because of levy of heavy taxes on shawls.





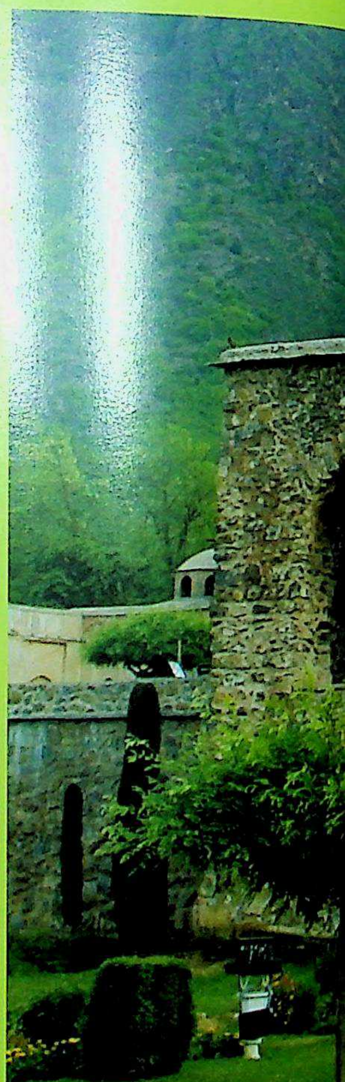
Zyetther

This tirath(religious place) known in ancient times as Jyesthsvara is located just below the Koh-i-Suleiman on Dal side near Gupkar. It exactly lies in the glen of the hillside of Zabervan adjacent to Oberoi Palace. Its spring known as Jyesthanaga is a favorite place of pilgrimage even at present for Kashmiri Brahmans. This is approachable from Boulevard road just above the city forest and Royal spring Golf Club.

Pari Mahal

As per Hiuen-Tsang, the site had earlier a big Buddhist vihar and a stupa where in the holly tooth of lord Buddha was placed, the traces of either important heritages are not seen now around. In ancient past, the site has been known with kashmiri's as "Kuntilan". Present Pari Mahal is located in the glen of zabervan hill on a spur between Cheshma Shai and Oberoi Palace on the southern side of famous Dal Lake adjacent to Raj Bahavan (Governor's house).

It was built by Prince Dara Shikoh, eldest son of Shah Jahan for his respected tutor Akhund Mulla Shah. Besides Akhund's summer residence, Pari Mahal consisted of the two schools of Astrology and Sufism. The name seems to be distorted version of "Peer Mahal." Up to recent past, it had woren a desolated look and had fallen in complete gloom and oblivion, believing that it was haunted by ghosts. Between late sixties and early seventies, the government has started its repair and renovation work through departments of Parks Garden and Floriculture in association with State Department of Archeology. The programme was carried under the leadership of Prof. K.N.Koul alias Mamaji. Subsequently, it was thrown open to public visit as well. Recently a motorable road has been opened from Cheshma Shahi garden to this important heritage site. The garden wears now a beautiful and captivating look. Lighting effects have been introduced in the garden which attracts large number of visitors during summer evenings. It is having seven terraces (up-hill) and it did not have a central canal or a cascade like other traditional Mughal gardens. The water was being carried from an adjacent spring through under ground earthen pipes, to irrigate the garden. It is surrounded by a wall and is spread on an area of 3.2 ha. From this garden, one can enjoy a panoramic view of the whole Dal Lake.







Cheshma Shahi

It is situated high upon the slope of a mountain (Zabaervan) overlooking Dal lake. It is about one km from Pari Mahal. The garden was laid out in1642AD under the orders of Shah Jahan by Ali Mardan Khan governor of Kashmir. It has a famous spring of cool transparent sweet water having unparallel digestive qualities. The garden is having three terraces, a central aqua duct tank, waterfall and fountains which are fed by sparkling waters from the spring. The garden is spread over an area of 6.5 ha and has been extended from both east and west side further, to accommodate more number of visitors who throng the garden especially at dusk hours in the summers. Lightening effects have recently been introduced to increase the grace of this Mugal garden.





Nishat Bagh

This garden is about 533 m long and 332 m wide spread over an area of about 20 ha. Surrounded by a stone and brick wall, the garden is arranged in ten terraces, 5 to 6 m wide, one above the other. It has a line of tanks along the center of garden, connected by a canal, which enters from upper side and flows through the successive terraces in cascades. The garden has a beautiful pavilion at the upper terrace where from the whole garden including Dal lake can be viewed. The garden has two side paths on either side of the central canal The entire garden is full of beautiful seasonal flowers, ornamental bushes and avenue trees planted in a formal type of a Mughal garden. The garden was laid out by Asaf Khan, brother of Noor Jahan, beloved queen of Emperor Jehangir in 1636AD. The garden is located just on the fringe of Dal lake.

Ishbar

The temple derives its name from a shrine "Iseshvara" and is located on a rock at a peak just above the present temple(Ishbar).It is said that it was raised by king Sandhimau in honour of his guru "Isana".The chief attraction of the shrine is a spring known as Guptaganga which is visited on Viasakhi by the pilgrims.



Shalimar Bagh

Mughal Emperor Jehangir on a visit to Dal Lake found a village Shalimar of exceptional scenic beauty and ordered for laying out a garden of royal status there.The garden was designed and laid out by one of his nobles Ali Mardan khan, who laid the gardens of Lahore,Agra and Red fort as well. Shalimar Bagh covers about 12.4 ha: of land having about 531 m length 240 m width, surrounded by a brick and stone wall three meters high. It is arranged in nearly four equal parts (terraces) lying one above the other.There is a chain of tanks (reservoirs) along the centre of the garden, a leading feature of Mughal gardens. These tanks are connected by a canal and provided with fountains.The water to the tanks and fountains is provided through pipes and runs in successive terraces. The 3rd terrace has a pavilion which used to house courtiers when ever durbar was convened by the Emperor.The 4th terrace of the garden was separated by a wall to accommodate the ladies of the harem. The central magnificent pavalion with raised platform has been subsequently built by Shah Jahan, having 140 fountains around with six polygonal black stone pillars to support the roof.Sonnet Lumeire (Light and sound programme) was introduced in the garden in early seventies. It gave a vivid description of historical movements of the royal entourage in the garden with special effects of light and sound taking the audience in the past (Mugal period). Due to turmoil in nineties, the

programme has to be closed. The garden is connected with the Dal Lake by a canal about one kilometer long and ten meters wide to facilitate shikara and doonga transport for tourists to the garden. The garden besides having stately Chinars is full of avenue and ornamental trees, bushes and beautiful seasonal flowers. The dense plantation has provided it an abode to the various types of birds whose morning melodious chattering would grossly enrich the garden and appease the Royal guests.

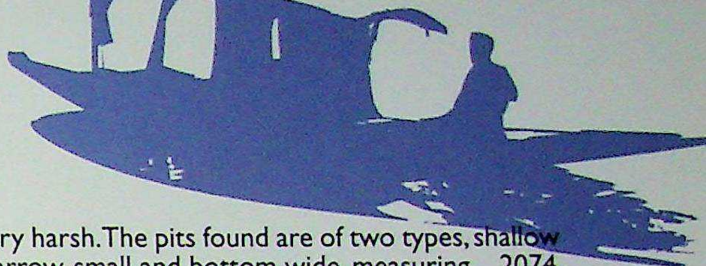


Harvan

A small old village (Harran /Sudrahadvana) now known as Harvan is called "The wood of six/ seven arhats (springs)/ saints."It is about five kms from Shalimar. Previously it used to be called "Katri-Daj" It is only during digging of a canal (kual) for providing tap water to the city people in early 20th century, that the labourers engaged in the work, incidentally encountered some remains of archeological importance which confirmed its earlier claim of being of some historical value. Formal excavation was taken up in 1919-29 under the guidance of Pandith Ramchand Kak. The site has a monastic establishment with a stupa and catiya which correspond to the stupa courts of Gandhara. The whole structure is located within an open quadrangle with its brilliant and fascinating large sized terra cotta tiles and pebble walls. Harvan ruins carry master architectural designs of earlier period. It was during the period of emperor Kanishka, that the great Buddhist teacher Nagarjuna (originally a local Naga) is reported to have lived here. He was a towering Bhuddist celebrity who denominated "Saka era" still in vogue in parts of India. It is reported that he was forced to leave Srinagar, when Buddhists were being persecuted by Brahmans and finally got settled in South India. .Nagarjuna Sagar dam has been built in Andhra Pradesh in his memory in Nagarajuna valley. Harvan was a great centre of Buddhism termed as Buddhistava, .where 3rd/4th Council of Buddhism is reported to have been convened in the first Century, by the Emperor Kaniksha. The final decisions of the council were engraved on "Copper Plates" and deposited in stone boxes(s) and buried under a stupa. Excavations carried out at Harvan, Ushkar and Ahan have revealed rich deposits of Buddhist relics but not copper plates. Archaeological survey of India (ASI) is reported to have temporarily stopped further excavation. On the basis of some important leads, it is believed that copper plates may be either at Bhuddahbal, Kanilvan, Brijbehara.(Hussnain). The names of other places suggested by some experts for excavation are like Kuntilun (area from Harvan to Gupkar Srinagar, Kund (kulgam) Kundalen (Shopian), Kanispora (Baramulla), Kanzal van (Gurez) Further excavations for recovery of copper plates if carried, and found, would focus the attention of world Bhuddhists towards Kashmir, thus giving a Philip to tourist sector of the State from all over the world.

Burzahama

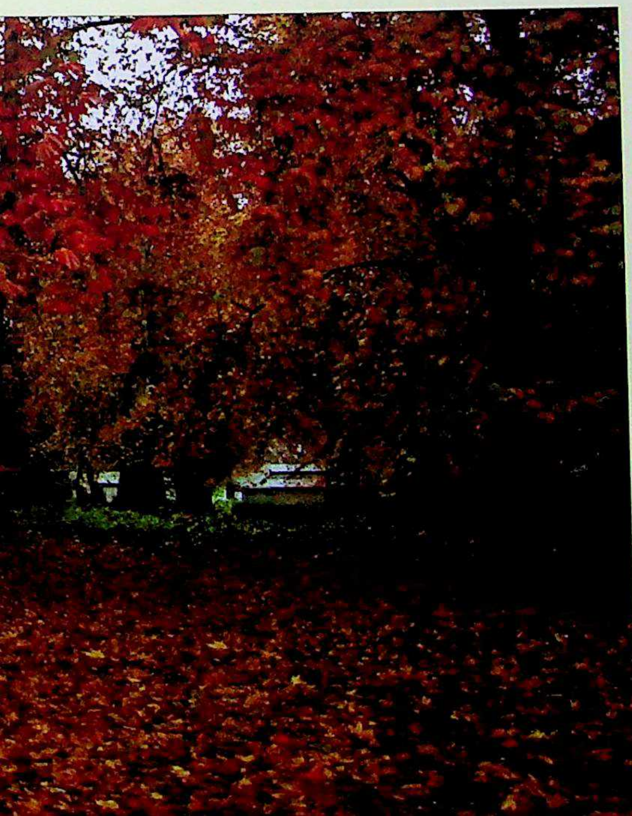
The village proved historic when a group of megaliths were spotted on a plateau by an archaeological team during the survey carried in early 1920's. Burzahama pit (Doub) dwellings are located between Shalimar and Naseem Bag on the up-lands "vader" on north eastern side of Dal Lake, about 24 km's from Srinagar. First identification/excavation of this site was undertaken by D.Tera and Peterson renowned archaeologists from Yale and Cambridge universities in the year 1928. Further excavations were undertaken by State Archeology Department in 1961 and continued up to 1982 under the guidance of Mr. T.N. Kazanchi. Till the excavations at Burzahama site, neither Neolithic settlement nor any stray find of Neolithic period (4000-2000BC) was recorded in Kashmirand the regions history was not going beyond Nagas who were believed to be the first settlers of the valley. But the findings at Burzahama, now speak about the civilization that flourished in 3rd2nd millennium B C, much earlier than Nagas. The pit dwellings probably belonged to the people, who might have lived at the last stage of Stone Age. Similar findings have also been reported from north China, Russia, central Asia, Iran and Blouchistan. The pits were probably used by the people



for living when winters used to be very very harsh. The pits found are of two types, shallow and deep. The opening of the pits being narrow, small and bottom wide, measuring 2074, 4075 and 3095 mts. at top, bottom and depth respectively. Some of the pits have adjacent small rooms (7- 6.45) meters as well.. From the excavations, it has been established that dwellers used bone and stone tools for living. It seems that pits were covered during winter by tree branches having Britch (burza) sheets spread over them. Some earthen arti-facts found in the dwellings carry the imprints of "patji" grass (woven mats) which reveal that grass mats were in use at that time. Some hunting scenes have also been observed on the clay walls of the pits.

Naseem Bagh

It was laid out by Emperor Shah Jahan and was/is an abode of thousands of Chinar trees, which at planting stage were irrigated with milky water as revealed by the records. Naseem Bagh (garden of breeze) is located at western side of Dal Lake. It was meticulously nursed for promoting exuberant growth. It was a beautiful camping ground, laid on ancient wood land and was used by European tourists. In early sixties, the first Regional Engineering College was established in this garden, now occupied by Kashmir University. It was famous for its serenity when cool breeze would blow through it, shaking the wild Iris clusters at the ground to lend it a feminine charm. Looking out through the shade of majesty Chinars, one can see straight across the Dal Lake, Shalimar Bagh and Dachigam valley, with snowy Mahdev peak in the back ground, towering above. Naseem Bag wears a beautiful look in autumn, when Chinar tree(s) look on fire because of mass effect of the foliage from a distance. This is because of change of colour of foliage (green to bronze red) in the autumn season (morphological character) just like in maple trees. The garden to meet its water requirements for irrigation purposes is reported to have a beautiful central canal, receiving water from old Habak nala. The canal was also serving to the Hazratbal shrine and would drain in Dal lake after beautifying its upper and lower gardens. The beautiful polished stone slabs of the canal are reported to have been removed by Pathan governor Amir Khan for reusing them in Sher Gari residence of the Governor. No trace of the canal or its cascades are seen now neither in Habak nor in the Naseem Bag.





Hazratbal

The Hazratbal Shrine is located on the western shores of Dal lake(Bud Dal). Earlier the site was called Bagi Sadiq-Abad, laid by a Mughal noble Sadiq khan in 1623AD. It had a beautiful building (Baladari) in the centre having decorative naqash nigari on the walls and was named as Ishrat mahal. When Emperor Shah-i-Jahan visited the place in 1634, he was highly pleased to see it and desired to call it as Ibadat mahal. Necessary changes were accordingly made in the building as per the orders of the Emperor, so as to give it a shape of a mosque. It is during the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb, that it housed the relic of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). The relic was transferred from khanqah khwaja Naqashband Sahib, on the orders of Subidar Fazil Khan, (1699-01) governor Kashmir, to avoid stampede deaths at the Khanqah, during the exhibition of holly relic for the public.

The relic is reported to have actually been brought to `Kashmir from Madina Sharief by Sayed Abdullah Sahib in 1111.H. Syed Abdullah transferred the relic to a Kashmiri merchant, khwaja Noor-ud- Din Sahib Ishawari at Bejapur, Daccan. Khwaja Sahib was arrested on the orders of Emperor Aurangzeb, in order to force him to part away with the holy relic. But Khwaja Sahib could not bear the separation of the relic. It is reported that he handed over the relic to his trusted servant (Ghulam Midanish) before his death, for taking it to Kashmir. Subsequently the relic was shifted from khanqah Naqashband Sahib to the new mosque built for it, and the site was given the name as Hazratbal by Fazil khan governor. In 1793 Nawab of Dacca, Nawab Ahsan-ul-Lah Khan who is reported to be originally a Kashmiri, constructed a big hamam adjacent to mosque for the convenience of the devotees (zaireens) during winters. With the increase in number of zaireens visiting the place, necessary changes and additions were made in the ziyarat in 1851, 1942AD. The relic now has been kept in a newly built grand mosque called "Madina Sani". It was built under the direct supervision of Sheikh Mohmmad Abdullah in late sixties (1968) to late seventies (1979). The surroundings of the mosque have been further cleared of all old structures and beautified further to accommodate more number of zaireens. Considering the popularity of the ziyarat with the people in the valley, having location in the immediate neighborhood of prestigious institutions like National Institute of Technology(NIT) and Kashmir University(KU), its expansion, beautification and improvement programme need to be continued further by the Waqaf (endowment) Board in collaboration with State government.







Rupa lank

This island is located in eastern part of Dal Lake (Bud Dal) and is now known as Char Chinari, because it has four chinars growing at four corners It is reported that it was built by Prince Murad Baksh in 1641, the then governor of Kashmir. Some are of the view that first foundations were laid by Sultan Hassan Shah in 1486.This is not also accepted, as some historians believe that the foundation of a structure was existing there in Pre muslim period as well. Travelers like Hugel and Temple have mentioned that some foundations already existed there. The place has been renovated and extended further during late sixties. It invites large number of picnic goers and tourists during summer.

Sona lank

This is also an island having four Chinars at four corners in Dal lake, opposite Hazratbal shrine.This is also a picnic spot used by picnic goers in summer.The person who has built it is not known, however, improvements have been brought in it from time to time. Pathan governor Amir khan is reported to have removed the polished stone slabs from adjacent Naseem Bag and reused them in this lank.



Koh-i-Maran/Hari Parbat.

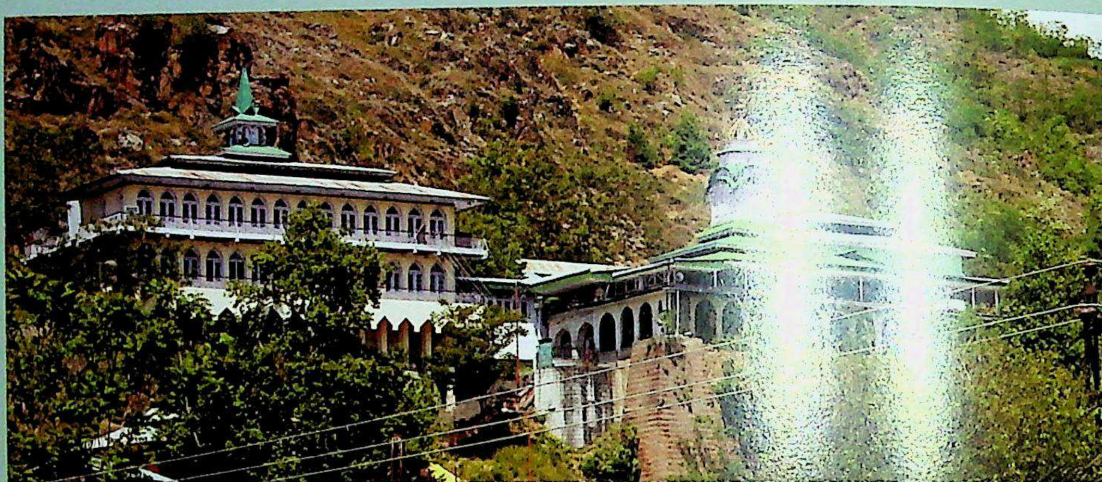
This hillock is an important land mark in the centre of the city.As per Hindu mythology, it is reported to have originated from destruction of a demon called "Jalodbhava" son of Sangrahasura who used to harass and terrorize the inhabitants of "Satisar"(valley of Kashmir) The goddess " Durga" who had taken the form of "Sarika"(myna) carried a small pebble in her bill and dropped it on the water borne demon whom she despised much, causing his death, which resulted in the formation of present hillock.(Stein)

Sarika temple situated on the north western spur of the hillock has been a site of pilgrimage for Brahmins of the city from ancient times.The temple has been renovated, extended and beautified further. Close to the foot of the hillock on southern side, is a rock image which was also worshiped by Hindus as an embodiment of "Ganesh" under the name of "Bhimasvamin" (Stein). Raja Praversena II built his palace (mahal) on the south western foot of this hill, which is not traceable now except some wall stones which come within the precincts of ziyarat Bahaudin Sahib.



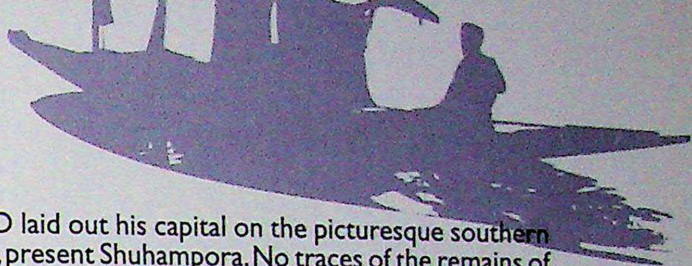
Ziyarat Makhdoom Sahib

On southern side of the hillock, is located the famous ziyarat of "Sheikh Sultan Humza(RA) popularly known as Makhdoom Sahib (1576).He has been a famous local saint (sufi) who initiated Kubravie order in the valley. Some historical mosques are located arround the said ziyarat, like masjid Jahangir, masjid Salar Baig, masjid Zakir, and masjid Atta Mohammed Khan. All these mosques have now been renovated. Some other prominent saints and personality's like Baba Daud kahki, Syed Mir khan, Sheikh Ghulam Muhi-ud-Din Governor Kashmir are buried here. Seven Sadats are also buried on south western side of the ziyarat, just out side the precincts of ziyarat, with a mosque built in their name as well. The stone steps of the ziyarat from west and eastern side were built in 1936 and 1960AD respectively. It is reported that Makhdoom sahib consented the deputation of some of noble persons under the leadership of Sheikh Yaqoob Surfi to Mugal Emperor Akbar, to get rid of shia sunni sectarian conflicts, common in Srinagar during the period of Check rule.



Masjid Mulla Akhund

Adjacent to the ziyarat, towards the eastern side, stands a beautiful black stone polished mosque and madrasa called Mulla Akhund mosque, built by Prince Dara Shikoh for his respected tutor Mulla Akhund Sahib. The mosque and madrasa was built in 1628 and completed in 1658AD. The Masjid and surrounding structures were closed for public visit in Sikh rule and got partially damaged when armoury was stored their by Sikh soldiers. In order to restore its glory, the State Archeology Department must start its repair and restoration work immediately besides attending beautification programme for its attached gardens as well.



Malkha

Sultan Shab-ud-Din Shahmiri(1356-76)A.D laid out his capital on the picturesque southern side of the hillock called Shab-ud-din pora, present Shuhampora. No traces of the remains of the said capital (structures or other artifacts) are seen around. The land on the southern side of the hill had also some structures, built for accommodation of the army. It is mentioned that the entire land was subsequently having a well laid fruit garden, referred as Bagi Angoori. (G.M.D Sofi). During Sultan Sikandar's rule, the land was purchased by Mir Syed Mohmmad Hamdani for converting it into a Muslim grave yard on the request of local Muslims, who were facing difficulties for a proper burial ground. The Bagh was converted into a graveyard present "Malkah" by Sheikh-ul-Islam Baba Ismaiel Sahib Zahid Kubravie during the reign of Sultan Hassan Shah grand son of Sultan Sikandar Shah in the last decade of 9th century (H). Malkha, besides for the locals, is the last resting place of some of the great personalities of Central Asia and North India.

Unfortunately until recent past, the graveyard was in a very bad shape due to criminal negligence of Waqaf board and indifference of the people. Nevertheless, the government through State Waqaf board has now raised a concrete wall around the graveyard. The encroachments made within and out side, need immediate vacation and attention of the authorities who must ensure its proper up-keep and maintenance. The status of the burial grounds speaks volumes about the civil society, culture and social responsibility of the natives.

Sikandar Pora

Sikandarpora was established by Sultan Sikander(1389-1413)AD between present Rainawari, Malakha, Gojwara, Nowhata, Khwaja bazaar, Malarata and Gojwara. A big palace was also built by the Sultan near Jamia Masjid where Mir Syed Ali Hamdani(R.A) was officially received by the Sultan Qutub-ud-Din as Sultan Sikander was on a military mission out side the valley at that time.

During the rule of Shamirs followed by Cheks Sikanderpora became a centre of religious activities, as number of official religious schools (madrasas) were established there. But most unfortunately this centre was badly damaged due to devastating fire which is reported to have consumed about seven to ten thousand houses in the entire area, completely consuming the Sikandarpora town.



Fort Hari parbat

Emperor Akbar on his first visit to Kashmir (1597) fortified the hill, when the valley was hit by a disastrous flood, causing severe famine. To provide succor and timely help to grief stricken starving people of the valley, both men and women were engaged on the daily wage basis for simple sustenance, in the construction of the fort wall (kalai). The present fort on the top of the hill was built by Atta Mohmmed Khan (Berakzai) (1810) the governor of Kashmir, when he renounced the authority of Kabul. Mohammaed Azim Khan (1813-19) completed construction of the fort when Mohammed had to leave the valley with Shah Shujah for Kabul.

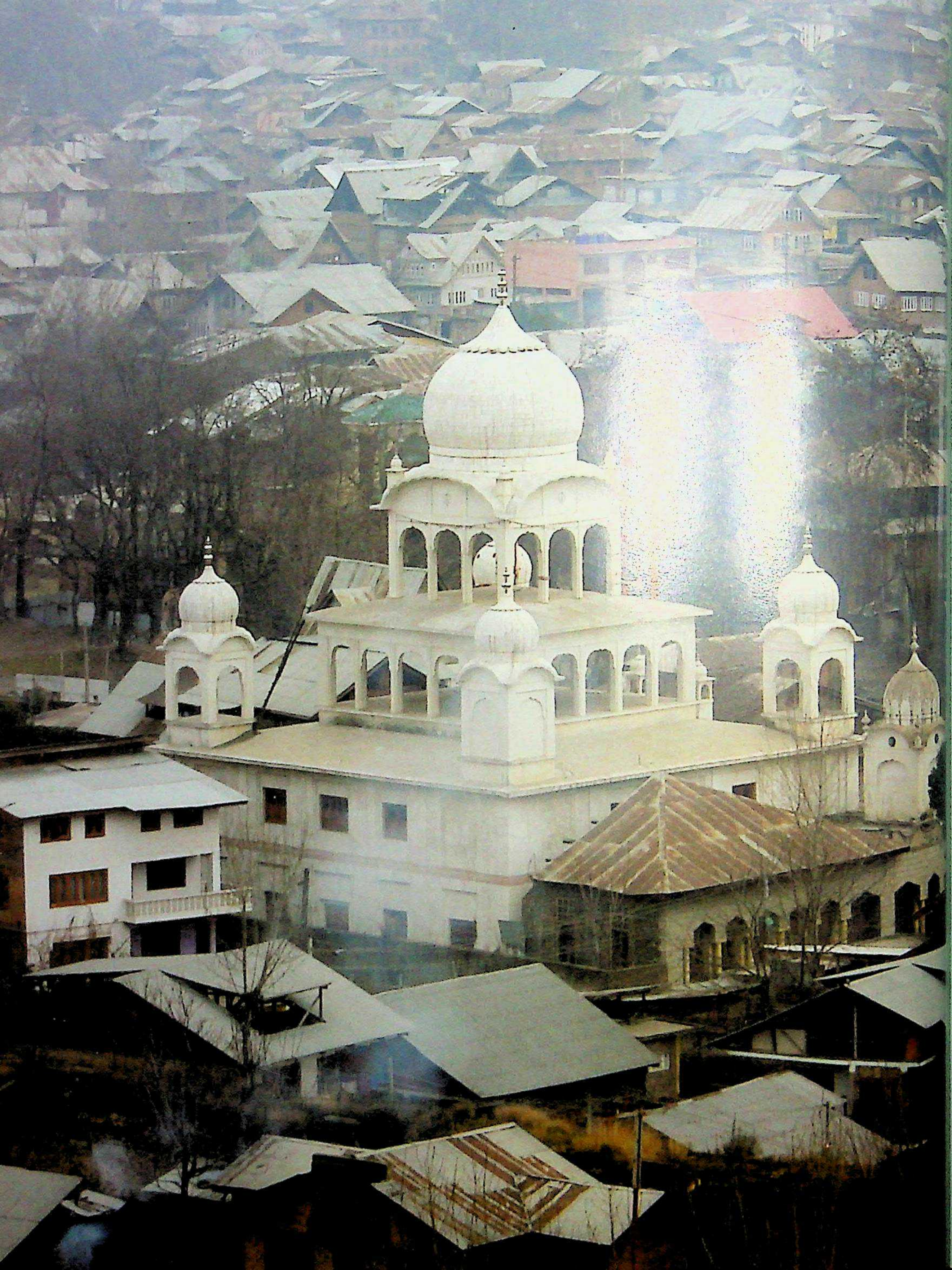
The fort has a moat as well around the fortification for defense purposes and to restrict the entry of common people inside the fort. The city inside the fort was called "Nagernager" and had a royal residence for Mugal nobles. It is reported that Sheikh-ul-Islam Baba Mohammed Ismaiel Zahid, 'Kubravie' had constructed a madrassa with residential facilities on the eastern side of the fort near 'Pokhri bal' a branch from Nagin Lake, the remnants of which (madrasa) are no more seen now. It is said that people of Kubravie thought would recite the "Aurad-e-Fathia" loudly after the morning prayers in the madrasa, leaving an echo in the surrounding areas of the Dal Lake. Emperor Akbar is reported to have built a palace called "Jarokha shahi" on/around the same site, having attached beautiful gardens, extending to shores of Nagin lake. The garden(s) were called Darshani or/ and Rooh/ Noor Afza bag.

The palace and gardens were built under the supervision of Kh. Hassan shah Kabli. The palace was beautifully decorated having naqsh nigari inside with use of sangi blour. Precious stones were used in the Mahal khana. According to Hugel, during the Afghan and Sikh rule, the whole palace was looted and plundered as it possessed valuable things, leaving nothing behind to be seen around. The fort and its fortification needs to be repaired, restored and developed on the pattern of Agra and Golkanda fort(s) to attract more number of tourists there. The land usurped by locals/slum dwellers in and out side the fortification (kalai) with connivance of local land mafia and willful criminal l connivance of concerned authorities, have turned it, in a centre of criminal activities, hence, warrants immediate action, even at the cost of displeasure of the local vote bank. This timely bold measure could only save the precious heritage site from further defacing, decay and destruction.

Present Central Jail and Mental Hospital are located within the precincts of these gardens. Up to recent past, the area used to be famous for "Badam vari" (Almond blossom) even up to mid 1960's, when people would throng the gardens in early spring for enjoying mass effect of almond blossom. The precious land has fallen to the greed of land grabbers, thus the elitist almond germ plasm planted during Mugal and Afghan rule, have been lost for ever, due to negligence of government and indifference of people.







Gurdawara Chatti Padshahi

On the southeastern side of the hill, just out side Khatee Darwaza, is a Sikh Gurdawara built in memory of Shri Har Gobind Singh Sahib, who accompanied the Emperor Jahangir to valley (1620). Guru ji is reported to have stayed in official residence built for royal guests at Nagernager and remained in the valley for about three months. Guru ji is reported to have met Bai Ram Das, a Sikh convert who was living just out side the fort wall. Thus the site became subsequently sacred for Sikh community. A Gurdawara was built(1819-21) during Sikh rule, at this very place, and is called "Chatti Padshahi." Initially a small wooden structure for the Gurdawara was first built when Hari Singh Nalwa was governor of the valley. Bhai Seva Ram son of Mata Bag Bari was appointed first sevak(attendant) and custodian of the Gurdawara. The Gurdawara was repaired and renovated in early fifties. At present a new Gurdawara and other structures are being built under the supervision of SGPC Kashmir. Large numbers of Sikh pilgrims visit the place on Sundays and annual devas. The whole area is inhabited by Muslim community who live in perfect harmony with the Sikhs.

Martyrs Site

Just out side the Central Jail, on the southern side near the fort wall, is an important heritage site (location) where hundreds of down trodden Kashmirs were gunned down by Dogra forces, on 13th July1931, on the first Kashmiri uprising. The place became immortal by the martyrs blood and as such, as a mark of respect to the martyrs, deserve a suitable memorial like "Jalianwala Bagh" in Amritsar. It is strange and surprising that even after 75 years of its occurrence, the location has no memorial to-date, in spite of the repeated pleas made by public and promises of the ruling government(s).

Ziyarat Sheikh Baha-ud-Din Sahib*

On southwestern side of the hill, lies the ziyart of Sheikh Bahaud- Din "Ganj Bakhash", a famous sufi, who was a deciple of Khwaja Hazrat Ishaq Khotlani, sonin-law of Mir sayed Ali Hamdani. It is said that the saint visited Khotlan and Multan Sharief spiritually (Batini) for having an audience with his Murshid (Khaja Ishaq) and Khwaja Baha-ud-Din Zakaria Sahib Multani respectively. In Kashmir, he has been a contemporary of Hazrat Sheikh Sultan Humza, Syed Mohmmad Madni, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani, Haji Baba Udham Sahib and Mir Syed Hussain Qazi(Shirazi).It is said, that he lived as a hermit for about twelve years under ZainaKadal bridge. He was given khitab (title) of "Ganj Bakhsh" by king Zain-ul- Abidin (Budshah) when he came in contact with him and was bestowed with blessings by the hermit as well. Budshah sahib, his Begum (Queen) and his wazir (minister) Malikh Ahmed had great regard and reverence for the saint (Ganj Bakhsh). Sheikh Sahib passed away in 1439AD and was laid to rest at a place, which Bibi Katoon(Ashama) begum (wife) of Budshah had originally selected for her burial. Subsequently on her natural death she was also buried on the eastern side of the precincts of the maqbara.

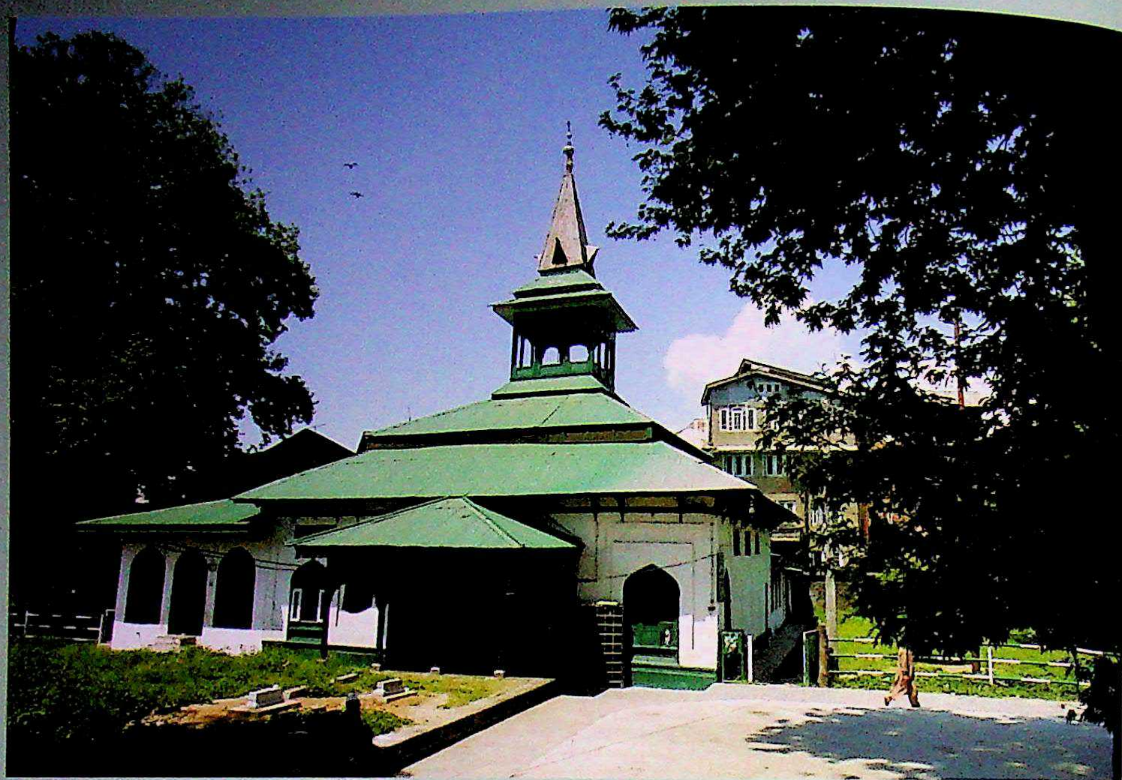




Jamia Masjid.*

Down southwest of the ziyart of Makhdoom Sahib, lies the towering Jamia Masjid, which has been built in 1398-1402 A. D by Sultan Sikandar Shah at Sikanderpora, present Nowhata. Master builders were brought from Khurasan on the advice of Mir Syed Ali Hamadani for building the mosque. Lachmi Khatoon wife of Malikh Jalal-ud- Din Tahkor, a wazir of Budshah sahib, got a canal (kual) extended from Nowshera up to Jamia Masjid and came to be known as Lachmi kual. The water from the canal was stored in a black stone tank in the Masjid. The water after using for ablution was drained in Nalamar. The remains of the Lachman kual are no more seen now. The Masjid was rebuilt in 1479, 1619, 1674 and 1841AD, because of damages caused mostly by fires, sectarian conflicts and political changes. The Masjid was rebuilt/repaired in 1912 also, when a non local top Muslim revenue officer (Sheikh Maqbool Hussain Qidwai) was approached by senior respectable local Muslims, with a request, to please, levy an additional anna or half as malia (land tax) on muslim peasants, so as to utilize the same amount for reconstruction /renovation of the Masjid, which was very kindly agreed to, with the approval of Maharaja. The repair work was undertaken under the supervision of qualified engineers provided by Nawab of Bopal and British Resident on honorary basis. The Masjid was closed during Sikh rule, by Governor Moti Ram and was reopened only during the governorship of Sheikh Gulam Mohi-ud-Din (Punjabi) before Dogras took over Kashmir from his son, Sheikh Imam-ud- Din (1846-47) who attempted a first uprising against Dogra rule in Kashmir. Maharaja Partab Singh and Hari Singh are reported to have also allowed the restoration and repairs of the Masjid during their rule. As per the opinion of the historians like Hasan khoihami, Stein and Lawrence, the Masjid has been built on the original site of a Buddhist Vihar (Tshang Tshiblak) or a Hindu temple (Maheshvari).





Mazar-i-Shuhada

Just down below Jamia Masjid towards south, lies the Mazar-i-Shuhada, inside khanqah of khwaja Naqashband Sahib, where the martyrs of 1931 are buried. It is reported that out of fear and threat of persecution at the hands of Maharaja, no body dared to offer the land for graveyard for the group burial of the martyrs at a single place. It was only khwaja Noor/Anwar Shah Naqashbandi, a member of the freedom movement and a visionary, who offered his ancestral graveyard for the purpose, risking his personal and family interests. It is also reported that the Jagir of Naqashband family was subsequently revoked/cancelled by the Maharaja. The mazar(graveyard) was originally a garden established by Sultan Hussain Chak(1563-70).Khwaja Khaund Mahmmod Naqashbandi built a khanqha there in 1633, in memory of Khwaja Bahau-ud-Din Naqashbandi(who is not buried there).After the death of khwaja Mahmmod in Lahore, his son Khwaja Moid-ud-Din came to Kashmir for management of his jagir and kahnaqha.This locality was given the name as Khwaja bazaar by him. He passed away in 1674 A D and was buried in the precincts of kahnaqah. His begum and his son's were also buried in the same maqbara.

Not far from Jamia Masjid and Mazar-i-Shuhada towards west, lies the ziyarat of Pir Haji Mohammad Sahib* which houses the maqbara of Sultan Qutub ud- Din and his wife.As per the historians, the site is reported to be an old location of some ancient Vihar or Temple.Which is confirmed from the old foundation existing their and the littered old stones around.

Mazar-i-Salateen.*

The site is named as 'Mazar-i-Salateen'as many of the Muslim nobles are buried here, including the kings and queens. It is located on the eastern bank of river Jehlum which houses the mazar of Sultan Sikander, Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (Budshah), his mother and mazar of Mirza Hyder Duglat, Kashgary. The main tomb is octagonal, roofed over by five domes. The central dome being the biggest consists of a single chamber in the middle with round projections at the angular sides. The super structure seems to have been imposed on a plinth of an existing structure. The massive structure raised occupies the grave of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin. The two Sultans viz Sultan Zain-ul- Abidin and Mirza Hyder Duglat) have been responsible for introduction of great art and crafts, architecture and building of hamams in Kashmir. They also brought number of master craftsman, engineers and builders from central Asia. This period is considered as the golden period of Kashmir from all angles including governance. The last king of Shah Mir dynasty Sultan Habib shah is also buried here. Unfortunately the cemetery is not properly maintained and looks into ruins, as it has been encroached upon and has turned into a common grave yard as well.



Shah-i-Hamdan Mosque.*

Just between Fatahkadal and Zainakadal (bridge) on the eastern side of river bank of Jehlum, lies the famous mosque of Hazrat Mir Syed Ali Hamadani (RA). Hazrat Syed Hamdani visited valley first 1372 and then again visited in 1379 and last in 1383 A D. The Hujra khas (special chamber) for the Syed Sahib was built by Sultan Qut-ub- Din in 1392AD. Subsequently Sultan Sikandar built the one storey mosque in 1394AD near the Hujra khas. The mosque was damaged due to fire and was rebuilt in 1479 and 1734AD. Diwan Moti Ram a Sikh Governor ordered to destroy the Kanqah(mosque) and positioned the guns just opposite the Khanqah on the western side of the river bank. .Fortunately, the tragedy was averted; on intervention of some nobles (Muslim and Pandith). The contribution of Mir Syed Ali Hamadani to Islam and Kashmir is unparallel. Most of the Kashmirs owe their faith and allegiance to Islam to this great saint of Hamdan. The mausoleum of the great saint (Syed Ali, and his son Syed Mohmmad Hamdani is located in Koolab, southern Tajkistan bordering Afghanistan. The khanqah in Srinagar is highly respected by Kashmir's. It is really a piece of Kashmir architecture having very delicate wood work (Khatambandi) and naqash nigari from inside which is highly adored and admired by all. It is reported that Raja Perversin- 11 had built a temple on the site, in the name of Maha Kali, just on the river bank. The symbolic remnant (Wall) of which still exists down below, adjacent to the river side. After the chief prohit of the temple accepted Islam at the august hands of Syed Ali Hamdani along with thousands of other local Pandiths, the entire area of the temple came under the control of Muslims. To commemorate it, a raised stone structure and masjid was built their by the Sultan(s).



Shahi Masjid.

The Masjid was built by Queen Noor Jahan in 1623A D. It is built from polished stone that is why it is also called Pather Masjid. It is located just opposite the khanqah Sharief (Shah Hamdan mosque) across the river Jehlim. The Masjid was repaired during the rule of Fazil khan Governor in 1697-1704, when a hamam and Madrasa was added to it. The Masjid was closed by Governor Sukh Jewan Mal in 1754AD and was used as a granary during famine. The Masjid was again repaired during the rule of Mir Hazar Khan in 1793A D. During Sikh rule the Masjid was again closed and was used as armoury due to which it was partly damaged. This was opened after 113 years, only when the Maharaja Hari Singh accepted the recommendation of Glency Commission, after uprising of 1931. The Masjid was damaged in mid sixties(20thcentury) during so called Awami Raj, when kohkas(temporary shops) caught fire, which were built in front of Masjid on the road side.. This has spoiled the look of the Masjid from front side.(western). Department of State Archeology, State Waqaf Board and Municipal Corporation should move in tandem, in order to remove the encroachments and to restore the glory and look of the majestic Masjid.





Ziyarat Dastagir Sahib

At khanyar, lies the famous ziyarat of Pir Dastagir (RA) which is highly revered by Muslims and Pandiths, especially by villagers in Srinagar. The site has no tomb or mausoleum in side but a mosque possessing the relic of Pir Dastagir Sahib (RA) The khanqah was built during Afghan rule by Hazrat Sakhi Shah Mohmmad Fazil Qadri, through Syed Gulam Din Azad in 1767A D, when Noor-ud-Din Khan Bamzai was Governor of Kashmir. Khwaja Sakhi Shah Sahib had come from Bagdad Sharief and came to Kashmir via Tahtah (Sindh) during the period of Emperor Aurengzeb. He started "Silsila Qadria" in the valley. The ziyarat was also repaired during the period of Maharaja Ranbir Singh by khwaja Sana-ul-lah Sahib, a rich shawl merchant of Srinagar.

Rozabal



This is a historical tomb of a saint having a Jewish grave located in mohalla Anzimar, Khanyar, called' Rozabal.' It is reported that Youz Asaf is buried here (110-12) AD. This also stands confirmed officially by Grand Mufti of Kashmir in 1766AD. This has also been reported by historians like Mullah Nadir in Tawarikhi Kashmir, khwaja Mohammed Azam in Tawarikhi Azami and various other Indian and European authors, latest by Holger Kersten (1994-01). The references about the visit of Jesus to Kashmir are also reported in "Bhavishya Maha Purana" and Kalhans Raj Tarangini. It is also reported that the structure at the Koh-i-Suliaman had a slab stone, mentioning about the visit of Youz Asaf to the valley Kashmir, which either has been stolen or destroyed due to religious bias during Sikh/ Dogra rule. Berneir, Jhon Foster and Marion Doughty have reported in their travelogues, that Kashmiris from their appearances, dress, some social customs, practices and habits looked like Jews, living in a big Jewish village. Similar observations have been made by late Mohammad. Amin Qureshi in his travelogue (unpublished), when he was in England in mid twenties (1922-26). He reports, that on seeing the Jewish clergy (Rabbi) for the first time in England, he was completely taken aback and astonished, as they were looking just like Kashmiri Peers without turban, responsible for showing antiques(Tabaruqatas) at different Khanqhas in the valley.

Ahamadi Muslims claim it to be the tomb of "Hazrat Issa" (AS) on basis of their research carried by the scholars of their organization, corroborating with "Al- Quran" (23:50). This is also supported by the manuscripts found in Hamis Gumpa in Leh by Nikolai Notovich in 1877AD by a Russian historian who visited the Gumpa and studied the related manuscripts. Subsequently he published it, under the title 'The unknown life of Jesus Christ' This also stands confirmed by lady H .Merrick in her book "The world Attic" which also reports the presence of "Issa"(Christ) in East. This is also confirmed by Faber Kaiser in his book "Jesus died in India" and Holgar Kersten in his book "Jesus lived in India." The latest controversy about "Da Vinci Code" Holly Grail, confirms also the findings of the manuscript. But majority of the Muslims and Christians do not subscribe to this view point. However, the matter is being seriously discussed/ debated in Jewish, Christian and Muslim intellectual circles world over. Nevertheless, the tomb has highest value from heritage and tourist point of view and shall open flood gates of pilgrimage tourist, if developed from that angle.

Hazrat Bulbul Shah Sahib

Between Alikadal and Nawakadal, famous ziyarat of khwaja Syed Sharaf ud- Din Sahib, alias Bulbul Shah is located .He is considered as the first Muslim saint who has visited the valley from Central Asia, during the period of last Hindu king " Raja Sahadev"(1300 -20)AD. Bulbul Sahib lived at the bank of river Jehlum near his present mazar. The Bhuddist king Giyalpo Rinchina, who emberaced Islam at the august hands of the saint, and was named by him as Sultan Sadr-ud-Din (thus became the first Muslim king of Kashmir) when Rinchina and his wife Kota Rani, a Hindu could not reconcile on a common faith. The king Rinchina and his all courtiers, family members and Buddhist living in Srinagar at that time, then also accepted the Islam.



The king also built a Masjid and Langer khana for the saint at the river bank in 1326-2[illegible] [illegible] which is still known as Riehthan Masjid and Bulbul Langer/ Lankar. The khanqah/ masjid was closed during Sikh rule, alleging that it was built on the original site of a vihar /temple. Bulbul Sahib passed away in 1326-27AD and is buried near the khanqah . The khanqah was damaged by a fire in 1613AD, when Mirza Akbar Ali was Mugal Governor in Kashmir. Sultan Sadr-ud-Din (Rinchina) had desired to bury him at his death in the same khanqah. The wish was carried when Sultan (Rinchina) passed away in 1323AD as Bulbul Shah Sahib was still alive then. He was also known as Abdur Rehman.



Hazrat Ouasi Sahib

Hazrat Syed Mohmmad Amin Ouasi,"Mantaqi" son of Syed Mir Mohmmad Hussain came to Kashmir from" Baihaq " a town in Khurasan (Iran) during the period of Sultan Sikandar Shah. He was a great sufi and a renowned Persian poet of his time. It was during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin that he was given all praise and respects when he was adopted as a son by the begum of Sultan. Khanqahs were built for him at Asham and Alikadal by the Sultan. He was martyred in 1484 A D near Nowshehra when he was at Mir bag, along with 14 other Sadats by local chieftains, when Tazia Bhat and Malikh Ahmed Yatoo, the two courtiers of the deceased Sultan fell apart on the transference of power to Syeds, considering them as aliens. The two courtiers belonged to Shia and Sunni sects respectively. The former was in favour of Chack and lator was in favour of Syed rule. It is reported that Hazrat Ouasi Sahib when murderously assaulted in Mir bag, requested for carrying his injured body to the khanqah at Alikadal, where he was buried next day at the appearance of a wooden plank in the river Jehlum just out side the khanqah, as predicted by him. The last wash (ablution)/ gusul was carried on the said plank as per his wishes, in presence of his large disciples. The wooden plank is still preserved at the khanqah.



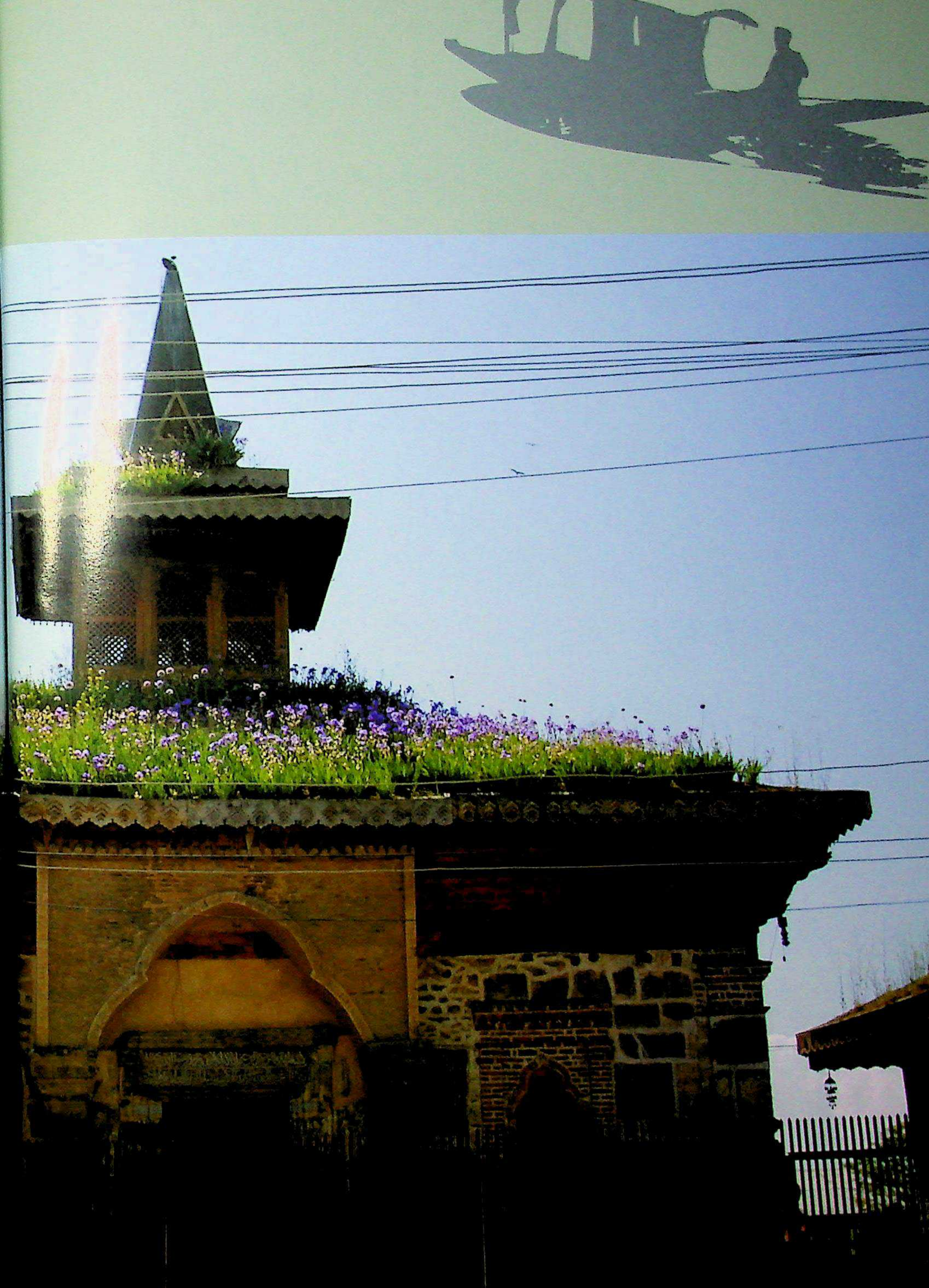
Ziyarat Syed Madani Sahib*

On north to northwestern side of the Hari Parbath lies the ziyarat of Syed Mohmmad Madani Sahib.This ziyarat is located between Sazgari Pora, Nowshera and behind Bagi Ali Mardan khan, present (Industrial Estate.) It is considered a master piece of Kashmir architecture of Pre Mughal period.

The main door of the ziyarat is reported to be in British museum. Its ceramic tiles, khatambandi (wood work) and naqash nigari in side the mausoleum are unparallel. It was closed by Maharaja Ranbir Singh, when sunni and shia laid claim on its possession It has recently been renovated by State Archeology Department,as it had fallen in back ground and wore a deserted look, because of some controversy over its control between Shia and Sunni community. It had a big surrounding area attached, where a madrasa, khanqah and a langer khana was built by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin.

The structures were damaged in clashes and devastating fire, caused due to local feuds amongst the claimants, after the death of Sultan. The area attached to ziyarat was usurped during the sectarian conflicts.





Mirza Akmal ud- Din Sahib "Badakhshi"

Mirza Sahib's fore fathers belonged to Tashqand and came to India via Badakhshan during the reign of Emperor King Akbar. His great grand father Malikh Mohmmad khan Baig was chief secretary (Mir Munshi) in Emperor Shah Jahan's period in Kashmir. His son Malikh Adil khan permanently settled in Kashmir. Mirza Sahib was born in 1644AD. At the age of twelve only, he came under the influence of a local saint called Makhdoom Sahib, and subsequently became his disciple after abandoning the official responsibilities. He was a great religious scholar, poet, adib, sufi and calligrapher. He was also an author of some important books. He had number of Khulafas (disciples) who subsequently were responsible for dissemination of his school of thought in the entire valley. He breathed his last in 1718AD. His maqbara is located at Hawal and revered by the natives.



Oanta Bhavan -Vicharnag

Oanta Bhavan originally known as Amritha Bhavan is located on the banks of Anchar Lake Soura town on Srinagar Ganderbal road about eight kms from Srinagar. This was originally a Buddhist vihar, built by Rani Amarita Prabha of Raja Maigvahn in fifth century A.D. This was built to accommodate Buddhist Bikhshus (Mahanaya order) who used to visit the valley from far flung areas when Bhuddism flourished in Srinagar. The site is reported to have been very famous with Buddhist pilgrims. In 1895AD, remains of a big mound having stupa type structure about 20ft high was located at the site. About 90ft from this stupa, a ditch type tank lined with stone/slate slabs was found existing. It is reported that Maharaja Ranbir Singh took away the slab stones from the site and used them in other temples.

Adjacent to the area is located a famous place called Vicharnag, reported to have seven springs. As per the Hindu legend, this is considered as oldest Asthapan of Hindus, where Shiva and his associates rested for a while, when God created the universe. Out of the seven springs, four are still giving fresh water. Two temples exist there; one was rebuilt by Maharaja Ranbir Singh in mid 19th century. All the four springs have been lined with stone slabs. The pilgrims visit the sacred site in second dark fortnight of the 'Chither' month (March) and take a bath and have puja.

Hazrat Baba Daud-i-Khaki Sahib

Hazrat Baba Daud was not only a great Sufi of Kashmir, but also an out standing 'Alim, poet, debater who had deep knowledge of Islam, Fiqh and Hadith. That is why he was called Abu Hanifa "Sani" in Kashmir. He was born in a famous(ganai) family at kalashpora in Srinagar around 1510-12AD. It is reported that his forefathers were linked to Hazrat Umer-i- Farooq RA (genealogically) He had a privilege to be a student of great scholars like Akund Mulla BaseerAine, Maulana Mir Raziud- Din and, Akhund Mulla Shamus-ud-Din Pal sahib. He rose to the position of Chief Qazi because of his wit, logic and other academic qualities. Before becoming the disciple of Sheikh Sultan Hamza, he lived a very comfortable life which he willfully deserted, when he came under the influence of Sheikh Humza in order to live a hermit (faqirana) life as per the wishes of his Murshid (Makhdoom Sahib). He was able to surmount all worldly temptations and became the first Khalifa of Makhdoom Sahib. He passed away in 1586 AD. after, retuning from Multan and other spiritual places of India. He is buried out side the Ziyarat of Makhdoom Sahib.



Khwaja Habib-ul-Lah Nowshri "Hubi"

Khwaja Sahib was born in the family of Khwaja Shams-ud-Din Sahib (ganai) in mohalla Nowshra, at Srinagar in 1555AD when Ali Shah Chak was ruling Kashmir. Khwaja Sahib came from a middle class noble family, known for Dini (religious) activities. In 9th(H) century much interest and stress was being laid for imparting Dini taleem(religious education) learning of Fiquh (Jurisprudence), Hadith(Tradition) and languages like Arabic and Persian from learned scholars in Srinagar. As Khwaja Sahib was not interested in worldly affairs, as can be inferred, when he was shifted from his family business, because of his indifferent attitude towards his parental business(to avoid further loses). He would usually feel homely in the company of sufis like Syed Hamdani, Sheikh Kamal-ud-Din, Sheikh Yaqoob Surfi. Mostly he would prefer to spent his time with Mulla Hassan Afaqi, a great scholar having command on Arabic and Persian languages and Fiqh, Hadith, Logic etc. He was also associated with Mir Mohmmad Kalifa and khwaja Yaqoob surfi from whom he learned poetry. He willfully avoided the company of rich people and abstained from delicious dishes, preferring fasts. He would prefer to share everything with the have-nots, even spearing his personal belongings with them. He had opened a Langer Khana (community kitchen) for common people. Initially he was also averse to music but subsequently he would like to be in the company of musicians."Sama" because of an encounter with Khwaja Daud Majzoub. His Sufiana Kashmiri poetry is considered of high order and it is said, that at times, he would himself also play the musical instruments. He attained martyrdom (shahadat) in 1617AD when the valley was under the grip of cholera killing hundreds daily. He was approached by the people requesting for "Dua" prayers in order to curb the deadly disease in the city. Khwaja Sahib asked the people to be patient and offered his shahadaht(martyrdom) for the same cause, along with his three other selected close disciples, namely Khwaja Mir Yousuf Qadri, Khwaja Daud Majzoub and Khwaja Sarf-ud-Din alias Shoga Baba of Pampore, who voluntarily joined him after offering Asar prayers.



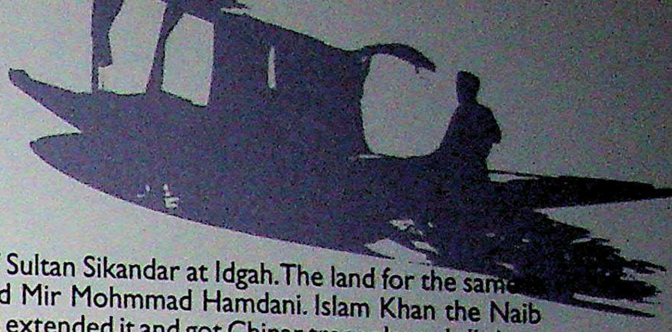


Hazrat Sheik Yaqub Sahib Surfi

Hazrat Sheikh Yaqub Sahib alias "Ishan sahib"was son of a Kashmiri noble, Mir Hassan Ganai. Ishan Sahib was a great 'Alim, Sufi, Poet and Politician. He in pursuit of religious studies, traveled to Khawarzam (Turkistan) Bagdad, Syria, Persia, Madina Sharief and Harat. He brought with him some antiques (Tabarukats) to Kashmir. He is reported to have met Sheikh Salim Chisti on his way back to Srinagar from Makha Sharif. He is reported to have met Sheikh Sirhindi Sahib also at Delhi. Ishan Sahib is reported to have performed Haj twice. He led a group of local nobles, constituted by Makhdoom Sahib, to meet the Emperor Akbar at Delhi, in order to invite him to visit Srinagar, where frequent Shia Sunni sectarian riots had become very common. It is reported that Mula Mohammed Aani and Mula Baseer taught him Arabic and Persian literature. Mula Aani gave him the title of Surfi and predicted his great literary eminence and called him as 'Jami Sani.' It is also reported that he was also responsible to introduce grafted fruit plants in the valley for the first time from Kabul. Ishan sahib was borne in 1522 AD and passed away in 1595AD and is buried at Zainakadal at western bank of river Jehlim.

Sheikh Habib-u-lah Sahib "Attar"

Khwaja Habib-u-lah Sahib alias" Attar" belonged to a rich business family (Ghani) of Srinagar. His father died when he was very young, thus could not get a formal education but remained under the influence of some great sufis of the time. He himself became a sufi saint performing great miracles. His chief disciple was Mirza Akmal-ud-Din Sahib. Aurangzeb on his visit to Srinagar called for all Mashaiqs, Ulma, Sufi, and Qalandars of the city, but Khwaja Sahib(Attar) refused to present himself. Subsequently, it is reported that they subsequently met each other at an arranged place (Char Chinari) and had an exchange of thought and detailed interaction. The emperor at the end of meeting wanted to present him some gifts which he refused to accept even when influenced through his first disciple. Aurangzeb asked for some good piece of advice, Khwaja Sahib said, "Be just and kind and you will receive justice" The mazar of Khwaja Sahib is located at Dabtal near alikadal.



Ali Masjid

Ali Masjid was first built by Ali Shah son of Sultan Sikandar at Idgah. The land for the same [illegible] reported to have been purchased by Syed Mir Mohmmad Hamdani. Islam Khan the Naib Soubidar(Governor)of Kashmir (1664-65) extended it and got Chinar trees planted all along the area attached to the Masjid. The Masjid was damaged due to fire in 1800AD (when Abdullah Khan was Governor). It was rebuilt by Sardar Gul Mohmmad Khan in 1801-02AD. It was during the period of Islam Khan Governor, that Emperor Aurengzeb visited Kashmir for the first time and stayed for about three months in Srinagar at Jarokha Shahi, a royal residence at Hari Parbat garden. Ali Masjid was not popular with the common people, as it was located at a forlorn place. Recently the Waqaf Board has took up the concrete fencing of the Idgah ground including the Masjid. A new metal led road connecting Safakadal with Soura has been opened through Idgah. The Id congregational prayers are being held there in fair weather onditions.

Zadibal

Mir Shams-ud-Din Araqi a muslim preacher of Shia faith came from Aaraq/ Talsh (Iran) to Kashmir in the reign of Sultan Hassan Shah grand son of Budshah in 1472AD as an ambassador of the ruler of Khurassan. Some report that he was actually exiled by the ruler/ governor of Khurasan and was forced to seek asylum in the valley kashmir. Being a renowned scholar of Shia faith having enough persuasive capabilities as a preacher, he was able to persuade a famous noble of Chack ruling dynasty of the Srinagar (khwaja Hussain Chak) to Shia faith, Consequently hundreds of the people who were under the influence of the noble accepted the new creed of Islam as well. In the first spell, he stayed in Srinagar for eight years and preached secretly the Shiaism in the city. He went back to Iran but returned at the behest of Shah Qasim Noor Baksh, head of the Noor bakshi sect. A first prayer house was built by Baba Ali Najar of Hassanabad, an influential Shia convert, at Zadibal for him, which was subsequently also called as Noor bakshi khanqah. It is during Check rule that Shiaism received official support in Kashmir and Shams-ud-Din (1484-1526) A.D was instrumental in propagating it. Shams-ud-Din also went to Askardu from Srinagar and was instrumental in propagating Shiaism among the Buddhists there. During the period of Mirza Haider Douglat, Shia Sunni riots were very common in the city, which lead to huge loss of property and human lives. The situation went so bad that even his son Mir Daniyal and Mirza Haider Douglat were slain in the communal frenzy. Mir Sham-ud-Din came back to Srinagar and died in1526 AD and was buried at Zadibal Khanqah.. His son Mir Daniyal was also reburied at zadibal khanqha when his dead body was retrieved from the graveyard at Dab (Ganderbal). His mausoleum is held in great esteem by Shia Muslims of Kashmir. Some of the persons have reported that Sham-us-Din's dead body was removed stealthily from the graveyard at Zadibal and taken to Chadora for re-burial by his committed followers, in order to avoid any disrespect or damage to the dead body during acute sectarian riots. The grave has been now identified at Chadora, restored and repaired by Aga Sahib of Budgam and is visited by large number of Shia pilgrims.



Gani Kashmiri

Just out side Bachi Darwaza near Rajorikadal lies the dilapidated house and neglected grave of famous Kashmiri poet "Mulla Mohmmad Tahir Gani". Whose Persian poetry attracted a Persian poet 'Saib' from Iran to visit Kashmir, to know the meaning of "Kralpan" a kashmiri idiom used by Gani in one of his couplets.

MOI MIANE TU SHUDH KRALPAN
KARDAH JUDA KASAI SAR ZE TUN

Gani is reported to be a student of Mulla Hasan Fani a famous Persian poet of his time in Srinagar. He was highly talented having wit and art of repatriation. Gani was a scion of Ashi family, highly egoistic, possessive and would never accept any dolls/favor or help from any body. He never attended any darbar(court) nor wrote any qasida (praise) for any ruler. It is reported that Emperor Aurengzeb, on knowing his (Gani's) scholarly poetry and calibar, invited him to Mugal Durbar Delhi (through the governor of Kashmir) but he very candidly and politely did not accept the offer, when insisted upon, he quietly slipped out of his home with out informing any body about his movement.

Gani has been highly praised by national poets like Galib, Mir, Sauda and Iqbal. The important site of his residence has been neglected by the government except opening a small insignificant library their, which too is in a very bad condition. A suitable memorial like (Tyagore Hall, Abhinou Theatre) needs to be built there, as a mark of respect to the poet. This would also serve as a centre for the cultural activities of the down town people, a need for which is badly felt.

Ganpat yar

Ganpat yar temple is located between Habbakadal and Gaukadal on the right side of the river Jehlim. It is dedicated to Ganpati and is reported to be an ancient site of Srinagar city. Some are of the view that this has been originally a Buddhist vihar. As per the experts, the polished stone pillars having peculiar type of carvings used in the temple on the front side, seem to have been brought from some other site. It is in 1854AD that the Maharaja Gulab Singh ordered for the reconstruction of the temple. The temple has been very popular with the kashmiri pandiths, as it was in the midst of old city. This has also served as a centre of activities (social, cultural and political) for kashmiri Pandiths right from late nineteenth century to date.

St.Luke's And All Saint's Church

Down Koh-i- Suleiman (Shankaracharya) hill, on its southwestern slope, lies the first Christian Church (St. Lukes) near Drugjan. The Church was built in 1896AD by Christian missionary in Mission Hospital, under the supervision of Doctor Earnest and Arthur Nev. who served the downtrodden kashmiris in the days of darkness and beggar (forced labour) during Dogra rule. All Saints Church was also built in 1896AD at a beautiful location in Ram Munshi Bag near Srinagar Club. The Church is in the midst of majestic chinars and was used by top christian gentry living there then.



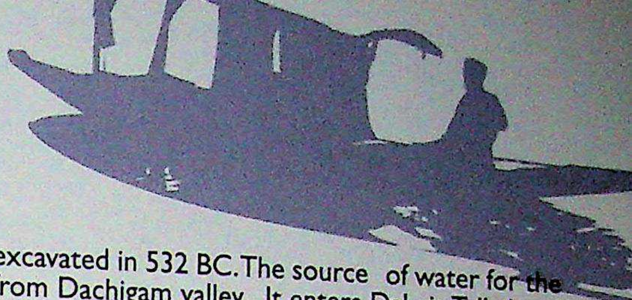
Durganag

This temple is located just at the foothill of Kohi Suleiman towards south eastern side.As per Hindu legend, when evil forces were harassing the Kashmiri Brahmins, they jointly prayed and requested the Durga Mata to save them from the evil forces. The prayers came to fruition, when with the blessing of all Godly forces at her command, she appeared and aboded at the very place where present Durganag is found and destroyed the head evil Durgam. Subsequently, this place was gifted by a spring by the Mata, which still exists. This place is being used by the pilgrims going for Amar nath yatra. The temple was raised by Maharaja Partab Singh in 1885-1924AD.. Now this temple has been rebuilt and is governed by a trust, called Durga Nag Trust.

Sher Ghari

This fort is located in the upper side of the city near Amirakadal. This was first built by Amir Khan Jawansher, the Governor of Kashmir during Pathan rule.(1770-77)A. D for his official residence. It is reported that this fort was built after demolishing the Jarokha Shahi palace and Darshani Bag at Hari Parbat fort, the remains (foundations) of which still exist there. The fort was renovated in Dogra rule and was named as "Narsingh Garh". Assembly hall and a temple (Gadagar) decorated with golden "kalash" was built within the fort on the river side during the Dogra rule. Originally, one side the fort extended from present Commissionery to old Zanana park (present New Secretariat) and from other side, up to old AmiraKadal Bridge, Shahid Ganj, present Accountant Generals Office and Fire Brigade Head quarters. It is said, that being a swamp (demb) the whole area was basically a Bihi (Quince apple) garden, and was called Dar-bag belonging to one Malik Saif Dar. (Fouq)





Nalamar

Nala Mar "kual"is reported to have been excavated in 532 BC. The source of water for the kual is Nala Dachigam which comes out from Dachigam valley. It enters Dal via Telbal and leaves through three main branches, one through "Tsount" kual which meets river Jehlum at Basant Bag near Gaw kadal. The other branch leaves via Nowpora, Baba demb, Bohrikadal, Sarafkadal, Qadikadal, Razikadal, kawadarikadal, Tarbalkadal, Sekidafar kadal and finally joins river Jehlum below Safakadal. This branch in particular was called Nalamar. Nalamar branch and most of the bridges (kadal) refered, were reported to have been built by Sultan Zai-ul-Abidin (Budshah) and some of his successors who fallowed him. Nalamar was once an important source of transportation for purposes of trade, commerce and internal movement of public, especially women folk. Most of the houses of rich people which were constructed on either side of the banks were facing Nalamar. This Nala was serving as an important drainage for the right side of the city. Unfortunately this portion of the Nalamar was filled during mid sixties of 20th century, in order to make a motorable road. Time has proved that it was a very wrong decision of the then authorities, creating number of problems for the city especially drainage. The third branch of the Nala moves through Sudrakhun, Buta kadal, Amdakadal and enters Anchar Lake and finally meets river Jhelim(Vitasta) at Sangam, Shadipora old (Shuhab-ud-Din Pora).

Seven Bridges

Prior to Muslim rule, no permanent bridge is reported to have existed on the river Jehlum (Vitasta) for crossing. The movement across the river was made by use of boats, because of the advantage, that the boats could be withdrawn easily at the movement of any threat from the enemy. The first wooden bridge on the river Jehlum is Ali kadal built in 1415AD by Sultan Ali Shah. The second and third bridge constructed are Zaina kadal built in 1427AD by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin and Fateh kadal in 1500AD by Sultan Fateh Shah respectively. The other four bridges viz Haba kadal, Nawa kadal, Safa kadal and Amira kadal were built by Sultan Habib shah in 1573AD, Noor-ud-Din khan in 1666AD, Saif-ud-Din Khan in 1671AD and Amir-ud-Din Khan Jawansher in 1774AD respectively. These seven bridges were master pieces of wood work representing the Muslim architecture (domes) underneath. That is why, the city was called, the city of seven bridges and was famous in European countries. The serpentine course of Nalamar and river Jehlum in side the city would add to its beauty and thus Srinagar was rightly called "VENICE" of the East. The city has also been compared with "FLORENCE" of Rome, because of availability of boat transport for the tourists through city water courses. Unfortunately none of these heritage sites (bridges) nor Nalamar exists now.





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** The sites are reported to be originally locations of Praveresvara, Tardeva, Sadhavashri, Lokeshvari, Kaleshvari and Rameshvari respectively as vihar/ matt/ temple (Steain.)*


SRINAGAR
DANGAR PURA
MALABAGH
HAFIZ BAGH
HABAK HOMNER
Veterinary Hospital
Shalimar Bagh
SHER-I-KASHMIR AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY
GADMARG
SHALIMAR GHAT
DADU MAHAL
Foreshore Road
Home for the Blind
Dream land
SOURA
ANCHAR
Anchar Lake
Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Science (SKIMS)
Soura Police Station
AWANTI BHAWAN
VICHARANG
Physical Training Centre
Nasim Bagh
KASHMIR UNIVERSITY
DAL LAKE
Gupt Ganga Temple
BOTSHAH MOHALLA
Post Office
Fire station
NOWSHERA
MUNDIBAL
SADARBAL
Hazratbal Shrine
Nishat Bagh
NIT
LAL BAZAR
KAKAR BAGH
BARIWAR SALOPURA
NALABAL
ARAMPURA
BHAGWAN PURA
Engineering College Hostel
FLOATING GARDEN
BAGH HUSAIN
ZUNNIMAR
Gil Kadal
Nagin lake
Nagin club
TAKIA LAL SHAH
LAM
Tangpura
Gil Sar
Madin Saheb Shrine
BEHRAR
Leper Asylum
SAILPURA
ALAMGARI BAZAR
ASHAI BAGH
Mir Behri
Khusal Sar
Mirza Akmal Saheb Shrine
BADAMWARI
Lotimahalla
ZADIBAL
Imambara
Firdaus Cinema
Central Jail
KHOJAYARBAL
BREN
Hari Parbat Fort
Mental Hospital
ABI KARPORA
MALPUR
Didamari Bagh
ARAMWARI
Islamia College
HAWAL
Makhdoom Saheb Shrine
Gurdwara
Ali Masjid
Chandihar
GOJWARA
NOWHATTA
IDDGAH
Malkha (Graveyard)
HASANABAD
Milk Scheme Dairy
RATHAPURA
MAHARAJ GANJ
Jamia Masjid
JLNM Hospital
Naqsh Band Saheb Ziarat
Botanical Garden
Bulbulshah Shrine
Tomb of Zain-Ul-Abideen
KHANIYAR
Liward
Green View
NEHRU PARK
SKICC
Centaur Lake View
Royal Springs Golf Course
KHAWAJA BAZAR
Dastgir Saheb
Bathing Boat
NAWAB BAZAR
Shah Hamdan Mosque
KARPURA PAYEEN
Lake view park
Chashma Shahi
KAKSARAI
Ziarat Shah Niamat-u-ullah Qadri
Post Office
NOWPORA
GAGRIBAL
CHHATABAL
Petrol Pump
Akbar
Shah Abass
Puri Mahal
Gole Market
Raghunath Temple
MUNAWARABAD
Ikhwan
Heemal
Shankaracharya Reserved Forest
Shankaracharya Temple
Grand Palace
To Baramulla
KARAN NAGAR
CHINAR BAGH
Lakeside
Boulevard
Takht-i-Sulaiman
BARBAR-SHAH
Golf Course
Dalgate
TATTOO GROUND
Indian Red cross Society
Broadway
Roman Catholic Church
J&K Bank
Tourist Reception Centre
Womens College
Polo Ground
SONWAR
General Bus Stand
Shergarhi Palace
Bus Terminus
Ahdoo's
Govt Art Emporium
Radio Kashmir
Govt Guest House
BATMALOO
Exhibition Ground
Jahangir
GPO
SONAWAR BAGH
BADAMI BAGH CANTONMENT
Amar Singh Club
LAL CHOWK
Geological Survey of India
MAGARMAL BAGH
River View
LAL MANDI
RAJ BAGH
Park View
Sri Pratap Singh Museum and Library
Broadway Cinema
IQBAL PARK
WAZIR BAGH
YEKRAJPUR
KURSU
Youth Hostel
JAWAHAR NAGAR
Narayan Math
GOGJI BAGH
RAM MUNSHI BAGH
GANDABAL
BATWARA
NH 1A
Archeological Survey of India
TULSI BAGH
Pandrethan Mandir
Silk Factory
SOTIUNG
PADSHAHBAGH
BARZULLA
To Anantnag



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